



SOUTHEAST NEWS

February - March 2016

Southeast Elementary School, 134 Warrenville Rd., Mansfield Center, CT 06250 423-2793

Dear Families,



I sit tonight at my desk reflecting on another great PTO event; Southeast's Cocoa and Cultural Crafts. We are so fortunate to have a community of parents who dedicate their time and talent to create opportunities to bridge families together. We are rich in diversity and parent involvement – this event brings the best of both strengths together. We believe that our school community improves with cultural understanding, sharing and learning different perspectives from our own. Thank you to everyone who was able to attend, and thank you to those who will consider sharing their talents for future events like these. We are stronger when we each find a way to become actively involved in our school.

In my previous letters I have written about this year's focus on class meetings at Southeast. I have written about the first two parts: greeting and sharing. This month I include information about the third part of class meeting, the activity. The teacher has choices regarding which activity to focus the class's attention. He or she may choose a formal game that students may play to help develop academic and/or social skills. Or it may be an activity that asks students to follow certain directions, or work together as a class. One class recently conducted research, voted and conducted fund raising to adopt an endangered animal. We find these activities bring the class together in ways that a typical day at school would not have afforded us. With academic pressures mounting, it is important to allow students a chance to release in age appropriate ways. Positive research on the Responsive Classroom approach continues to mount. It's fascinating that students can excel more academically by having these blocks of time structured in our days. Similarly, my staff just met to share mid-year student progress with me, and I am amazed at how much academic growth many of our students have made in a half year. The staff continues to work together to support each other in this school-wide initiative, and for the extra effort and planning, I am grateful.



Lastly, we held a student assembly a few weeks ago to kick off the new year. Playground safety is our goal. Please check in with your child at the end of the day to ask what he/she did to make the playground safe at Southeast School. Your support is invaluable. Enjoy the remaining months of snow. My next letter should bring flowers, hopefully!

Fondly,
Mrs. Lauren Rodriguez, Principal

Calendar of Events

February

- Feb. 1..... 6:30 pm- PTO Meeting
- Feb. 12..... 11:30 am-1:30 pm- 4th Gr. Skating Field Trip
- Feb. 14..... Valentine's Day
- Feb. 15..... **NO SCHOOL** - Presidents' Day
- Feb. 16..... **NO SCHOOL** - February Vacation
- Feb. 18..... 3:30-5:00 pm- Green Thumbs Club
- Feb. 22..... 3rd Grade Science Workshop



Happy Valentine's Day



POTLUCK DINNER

March

- Mar. 3..... 6:00 pm- Savor the Flavor Potluck
- Mar. 7..... 6:30 pm- PTO Meeting
- Mar. 13..... Daylight Savings Time Begins
- Mar. 17..... St. Patrick's Day
3:30-5:00 pm - Green Thumbs Club
7:00 pm- SE Music Concert
- Mar. 18..... 3rd Grade Science Workshop
- Mar. 20..... First Day of Spring
- Mar. 23..... 9:15 am-2:45 pm- 3rd Grade Bowling Field Trip
- Mar. 24..... **NO SCHOOL** - Professional Development Day
- Mar. 25..... **NO SCHOOL** - Good Friday



Bowling



Thank you.....

Thank you to our parents who volunteer and help with so many projects during these busy school days. The generous gift of your time and energy is greatly appreciated.

And, of course, thank you to our PTO officers this year –

President.....Erin Clark

Vice-Presidents: Lindy DeGennaro & Mel O'Donovan

Co-Secretaries.....Jennifer Mott & Sheralyn Sibilia

Treasurer.....Noreen Halbrooks

Attendance Line/Nurse: 423-2793 Please call by 9:00 AM if your child will be absent or tardy



Mrs. Irvine, Josephine, Trinity, Akosua, Braeden, Levi, Ryan, Señora Hutton

Connecticut Association of Elementary Schools Student Leadership Training Conference

On Thursday, January 7, 2016, six Southeast School fourth grade students attended the Connecticut Association of Schools Elementary Student Leadership Training Conference at Asnuntuck Community College in Enfield. Ryan Dunstan, Akosua Hansen, Trinity Jones, Braeden Roberts, Josephine Watson Stokland, and Levi Zuraw-Friedland represented Southeast School along with hundreds of other fourth through sixth grade student leaders from around Connecticut. The students attended fast paced and thought-provoking classes on communication, productive thinking, decision making, and problem-solving. Each class was led by taught by teacher leaders, high school and college students from around the state. Señora Hutton and Mrs. Irvine were pleased to lead three sessions about communication. We were also joined by Josephine's mother, Ms. Watson, who attended a parent workshop. Highlights of the day for the students included: learning about the Kid Governor project and The Look for the Good organization, making new friends, working together, and learning skills that will help us in the future. For the closing assembly, we learned *Roar* by Katy Perry in sign language. We also did various drama activities like making a rainstorm together. Through these games, we learned how to work as a team and appreciate people who are different from us. The students are very excited to use their new ideas and put their leadership skills to work at Southeast School.

Diversity and Cultures Around the World

During the month of December, first grade students enjoyed a trip around the world with Globe Trot Scott learning about holiday celebrations. Each day we received a package from "Globe Trot Scott" with a book, a fact sheet, and an activity from the country he was visiting. Along with these activities, we were fortunate to have the opportunity to enhance our lessons with presentations by many of our parents. We would like to thank the following families for their participation:

- Sarah Kaufold taught us how to make an advent calendar and taught us a Christmas carol.
- Olivia Lacy taught us how to make stovetop potpourri and sent each student home with his or her own sample.
- Ellen Litman taught us about New Years celebrations in Russia.
- Mugagga Mbabali taught us about Christmas celebrations in Uganda.
- Min Yang and Qiwen Hu taught us about Chinese New Year and showed each student how to cut out a Chinese character.
- Laura Kravet taught us about Hanukkah celebrations and sent each student home with supplies for playing dreidel.
- Georgia and Ted Panagopaulos, and Mickey Maheu helped our students build gingerbread houses.
- Señora Hutton taught us about Las Posadas celebrations in Mexico.
- Andrea Lennon taught us about Christmas in Germany.

This was a wonderful opportunity for first graders to learn about diversity and cultures around the world. Thank you!

Ms. Bayard and Ms. Hathway



Building Gingerbread Houses with Mr. Panagopaulos



Mr. Mbabali tells the class about Christmas in Uganda.



We need your help! Project Feeder Watch

Project Feeder Watch is a winter-long survey of birds that visit feeders at backyards, nature centers, and community areas in North America. Our students and staff have been counting the birds they have seen at the multiple feeders in the garden at Southeast School since November. This data has helped scientists track movements of winter bird populations and long term trends in bird distribution. Any students interested in birds can participate.

In order for this project to be successful, we need to keep our feathered friends well fed. The feeders need to be filled at all times. **Our seed supply is running low.** If you are willing to donate a bag of bird seed, please drop it off in the office. All donations are greatly appreciated any time throughout the year.

Thank you, Mrs. Ziko and Mrs. Davidson

Student Attendance

Regular student attendance is essential to the education process. School systems are required to monitor attendance and report students who are truant to an appropriate agency. In order to assist the District requirements, with a minimum disruption to the educational programs, we ask that you help us by doing the following:

Please call the attendance line 423-2793 by 9:00 am if your child will be absent.

If you know ahead of time that your child will be absent from school, please send a note to the office or call the attendance line. If your family will be away on a trip, please let the teacher and office know, in writing, at least one week in advance.

Communication about attendance issues is valuable. An unreported absence imposes an additional burden on the office staff. If we do not hear that your child will be absent, **we are required to try to locate you at home, at work or elsewhere** to verify your child's absence. Accordingly, we ask that you make a conscientious effort to call or send a note when there is an absence so we do not have to spend excessive time with follow-up telephone calls and you are not interrupted at work.

A full copy of the Board's policy and regulation is available on the Board's website at: www.mansfieldct.gov/mboe and also in the Parent Handbook (pg. 5-7) that you received at the start of the school year.

Box Tops for Education Labels for Education



Thank you to all families, students, and staff who continue to bring in the Box Tops & Labels for Education.

For the time period 3/4/15 to 11/2/15 we raised \$465.80 for our school PTO!

Our next submission is March 1st.

Keep those labels coming!



Help Us Help Others January 15 to February 12

The No Freeze Center in Willimantic is a shelter for people who have no place to stay and they need our help!

A lot of people are coming in because of cold weather. Fourth graders Lila, Avia and Allison have started a drive to collect items. Here is a bunch of things that you can bring in.

Thank you for your help!

Pre-K.....	Hot Chocolate
Kindergarten..	Hot Chocolate
1st Grade.....	Women's white socks, Tissues
2nd Grade.....	Paper towels, Toilet paper
3rd Grade.....	Men's white socks, Napkins
4th Grade.....	Shampoo, Toothbrushes, Toothpaste



Science Fair & Invention Convention

Attention Parents! We are hoping that you can be a part of our enrichment program.

Our **Science Fair and Invention Convention** has been scheduled for **Wednesday, April 6th**. We love to see the creativity, perseverance and inquiry in these projects each year.



If you are available to support this popular event, please email Susan Irvine susan.irvine@mansfieldct.org or meet in Rm. 22 on **Thursday, February 11th at 8:20 am**.

There are many tasks so if you have even 30 minutes, we would love your help.



Valentines for Our Servicemen & Women Overseas and Here at Home!



Second graders recognized the 100th day of school by making Valentine cards for our servicemen and women. Students and staff wanted to show our gratitude for all our service people do to keep our country safe and protected.

Farewell, Mrs. Proffer. We will miss you!



The entire Southeast School Community wishes Mrs. Denise Proffer well in her new position! On February 12th, Mrs. Proffer will have her last day working here at Southeast School. She is leaving to become a Special Education Supervisor in Glastonbury and we are so proud of her. Please take a moment in the next few weeks to wish her well! We know she will be outstanding in her new role, but we will miss her here at Southeast.

Welcome, Mrs. Johnson

Please help us welcome Mrs. Kristen Johnson who was hired as a regular education para educator for first grade! Mrs. Johnson served as Mrs. Proffer's maternity leave substitute for the past 3 months. The staff and children loved her so much, we couldn't let her go.

Mrs. Johnson is a certified special education teacher, and mom to two beautiful children.

Welcome Kristen!



Third grade writers Ambrosia, Gabby, Kaia, Hala, Tyler, Madeline, Isaiah, Om, and Madison (seated) with Mrs. Johnson.

Third Grade Writing Group

Southeast parent, Cheri Johnson, volunteered to run a recess and lunch writing group for interested third grade students for four weeks in January and February. Students brainstormed ideas and practiced their writing skills with the theme of "Monsters". There were many smiles and giggles as students shared their scary, ugly, and silly monster adventures with each other.

Do YOU have a skill that you would like to share with Southeast students? Chess? Origami? Cooking? Gardening? Storytelling? Drumming? We would love to find a way to share your talents with Southeast students. Contact Southeast enrichment teacher Susan Irvine at irvinesb@mansfieldct.org for more information.



GIVING TREE

Thank you to all who donated gloves, mittens, hats and scarves to our Giving Tree.

We also received many coats, snow pants, boots and sweaters. Mansfield Youth Services distributes these items to families who need a little help this time of year.

Thank you so much for your community support.

DRESSING FOR THE WEATHER

Now that the weather is changing and temperatures are dropping, dressing your child appropriately for the weather is important. Students will be sent outdoors for recess, weather permitting. It is important for the students to go out in the fresh air and exercise.

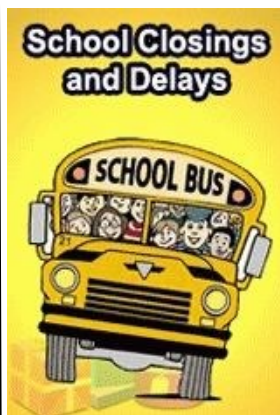


Please be sure your child has a winter coat, gloves or mittens and hat. For your child's comfort please include boots, snow pants and an extra pair of dry socks when there is snow on the ground.

Thank you for your extra effort.

WINTER WEATHER, DELAYED OPENINGS, EMERGENCY EARLY CLOSINGS

As winter approaches, the possibility exists for storms that would require the Superintendent to order a delayed opening or an emergency early closing. The Mansfield Public Schools use an automated phone dialer to notify families in the event of a weather related delayed opening/closing or other urgent message. Please make sure the school office has your current phone numbers. Call us at 860-423-2793.



Earlier in the school year, parents were asked to fill out a form telling us where to send their child/ren in the event of an emergency early closing. Please make sure that this plan is up to date and let the office know of any changes.

For more information about delays and emergency early closings, please log on to our website at:

www.mansfieldct.gov
and click on schools.